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ABSTRACT

Based on adult education students who completed Ph.D. work in the Department of Education, University of Chicago, during 1960-69, this study examined the problems they perceive in completing doctoral study. Eighty-five doctoral graduates submitted usable questionnaires. Data were obtained on completion time as related to such variables as number of dependents, sources of financial support, language requirements, leaving or not leaving the university before completing the program, time expected for completion, perceived adequacy of counseling, perception of delaying factors as internal (personal) or external (circumstantial), and conditions seen as aiding or hindering progress at various stages. Respondents completed the Ph.D. at least as quickly as students in most other special fields within the Department of Education. The graduates who had finished most quickly had several dependents, worked part time and/or received a university scholarship or support from a home university, completed preliminaries in four quarters or less, and saw delaying factors as primarily external rather than personal. Unfavorable perceptions of counseling especially at the entry and proposal stages, have increased as faculty and student body size have grown. [Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (LY)

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SUBMITTED TO:

THE ADULT EDUCATION STUDENT COMMITTEE

by:

COMPLETION STUDY SUBCOMMITTES

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AC 008 718

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section

I. INTRODUCTION 1

II. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES OF DATA OBTAINED FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE 2

A. General Demographic Description 2
B. Rate of Completion 2
C. Influence of Master's Degree from University of Chicago on Completion 5
D. Influence of Number of Dependents, Sources of Financial Support and Institutional Relationship on Completion Time 9
E. Influence of Leaving the University before Completion 10
F. Influence of Perception of Completion Time Expectations, Adequacy of Counselling, Delaying Factors as Internal or External and Major Factors with Influence on Rate of Completion 14
G. Influences of Language Requirement 17

III. ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION . . 36

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY 38

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 41

. 43

COMPLETION STUDY REPORT

Section I. Introduction

This study of the problems adult education students perceive in completing the Ph.D. program was initiated by the Adult Education Student Committee in September, 1969. The purpose of the study was two-fold: to obtain actual data on rates of completion of students in the Ph.D. program and to attempt to identify problem areas which could serve as foci for faculty and student efforts to overcome these problems.

Several questions guided the development of the questionnaire portion of the study: How long does it take students to complete the Ph.D. program? Has the average length of time taken to complete various stages of the program changed over time? What are the major factors students perceive as contributing to slowing down progress on the Ph.D.? Are the problems experienced primarily internal, in the student, or external, in the system? Do problems seem to be more serious at certain stages of the Ph.D. program? Does the counselling system adequately prepare the student to anticipate and prepare to deal with difficulties? What are the effects of the foreign language requirement? What are the effects of various forms of financial assistance on completion time? These and other questions will be dealt with in this report.

This report is divided into five sections: an introduction, the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire, an analysis

of data received from the Department of Education comparing adult education with the other special fields, a description of the limitations of the study, and a final interpretative section in which conclusions and recommendations from the sub-committee are presented.

Section II. Presentation and Analyses of Data Obtained from the Questionnaire

A. General demographic description.

One hundred thirty-one questionnaires were sent out to four groups of respondents.

Group 1 - Graduates of the Ph.D. program

Group 2 - On campus students enrolled in the Ph.D. program before fall, 1969

Group 3 - Off campus students actively working on their dissertation

Group 4 - Off campus students identified by the faculty as being inactive at this time.

Of the 131 questionnaires sent out, 91 were returned (70%). Of these, six were not useable due to their being returned too late or incompletely filled out. Table one shows the distribution and percentage return in each of the four groups.

TABLE 1. Distribution and Return of Questionnaires by Groups

GROUP	# of Questionnaires sent	# of Questionnaires returned	% return
1 Ph.D.'s Completed	62	44	71%
2 Students in Residence	24	18	75%
3 Students not in Residence	30	15	50%
4 Inactive Students	15	8	53%
Total	131	85	

TABLE 2. Percentage Distribution of Usable Returns by Four Groups.

Group	% of Usable Returns
1 Ph.D's Completed	53
2 Students in Residence	21
3 Students not in Residence	18
4 Inactive Students	9

The breakdown of respondents by groups and date of entry into the program is shown in Table 3.

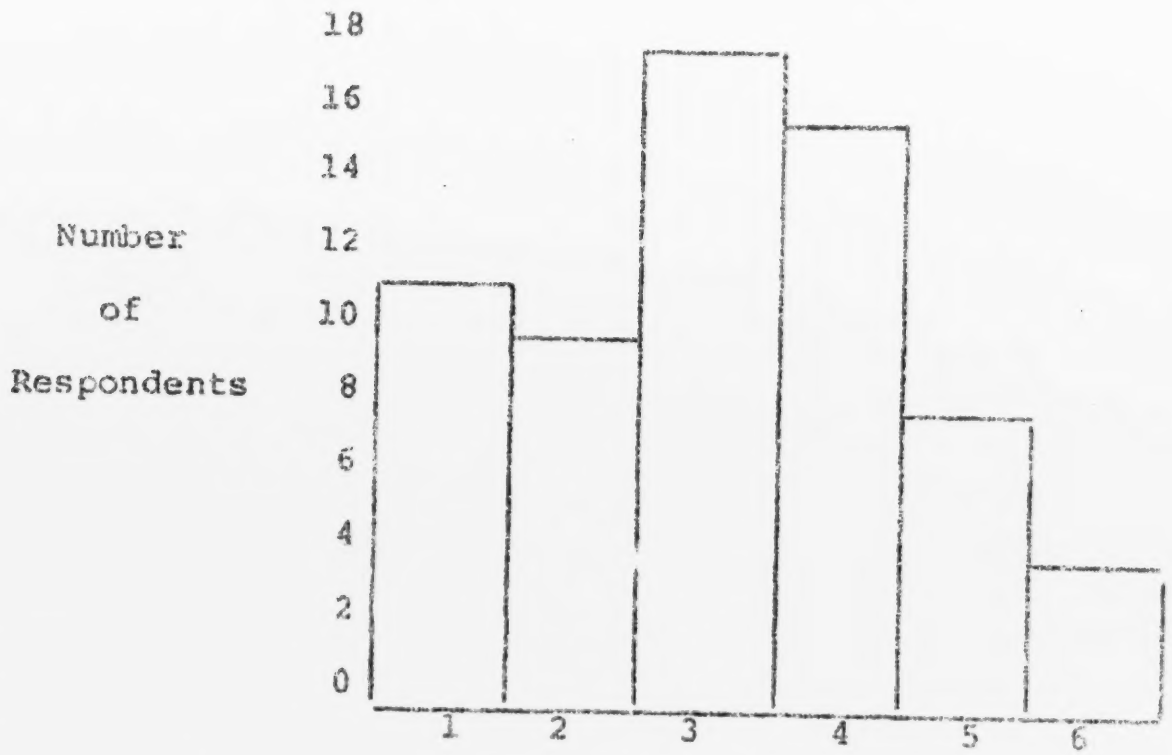
TABLE 3. Respondents by Groups and Date of Entry into Ph.D. Program

Date of Entry	Total N	Total %	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
1935-49	10	12%	10			
1950-59	25	30%	21			4
1960-69	50	59%	13	18	15	4
Total	85		44	18	15	8

Sixty-eight men and 17 women made up the sample, with 19 of the respondents being unmarried at the time of entry into the program. Sixty-four of the respondents reported living in Hyde Park during their campus stay, with 21 living elsewhere.

Married students reported that the number of dependents ranged from 1 to 6 in the following distribution:

FIGURE 1: Distribution of Number of Dependents



Forty-two percent of the married students reported that their spouse worked while they were students on campus. Of the total group (85) 63.8% reported that they had left the campus before finally completing their orals and obtaining their Ph.D.

At the time of entry the respondents' ages fell into the following categories:

TABLE 4. Age Frequency of Respondents at Graduate Program Entry

Age at Entry	Number of Respondents
20-29	18
30-39	42
40-49	24
50-59	1

The average age of respondents in group 1 at time of entry was 34.3 with a median of 34.5; the average age of Group 2 and 3 (combined) at time of entry was 34.6 with a median of 34.7.

The profile of the average Chicago adult education Ph.D. student which can be drawn from these data is a married man, in his 30s, with two to three children, who chooses to live in Hyde Park. In four out of ten cases his wife is working to help him through school.

The 95 respondents were predominantly white Protestant or Catholic Americans; in the group there were two Mormons, two of the Jewish faith, and five foreign students including Canadian.

5. Rate of Completion

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of quarters which elapsed in various periods of their educational career and the number of courses taken per quarter. Response categories were provided for full-time and part-time enrollments. This format did not provide a special category for quarters elapsed but not enrolled. The data are analyzed here in terms of total quarters (full-time and part-time) reported for each period by group. It should be remembered here that Group 1 is not strictly comparable to the other groups because there is a possibility that unpublished cohorts of the Group 1 respondents were not included in the total sample (See further discussion in Section IV.).

These data indicate that 50% of the U. campus student group (Group 2) report taking more than 4 quarters to pass prelims as compared to 22% of the graduate Ph.D.'s (Group 1). Seventy percent

TABLE 5. Rate of Completion Within Adult Education Program as Reported by Graduates and Students

Time Period	Group	N	4 Qtrs or less	5-7 Qtrs	8 or more Qtrs
Enrollment to Prelims	1	37	78.4%	16.2%	5.4%
	2	12	50.0%	25.0%	25%
	3	12	75.0%	25.0%	0
	4	7	100.0%	0	0
Prelims to Appointment of Committee	1	33	75.7%	5.3%	18%
	2	10	30.0%	60%	10%
	3	10	90.0%	10%	0
	4	4	100.0%	0	0
Appointment of Committee to First Draft	1	31	61.3%	16.1%	22.6%
First draft to orals	1	36	80.6%	5.5%	13.9%

of the students on campus report taking more than 4 quarters between prelims and appointment of committee compared to 23.3% of those who completed their Ph.D.s. Five to 25% of all on campus and graduated students take 8 or more quarters in completing any one of the four phases designated.

For those who have completed their Ph.D. the general pattern is to take 3 or 4 quarters to complete prelims (78%), 1 or 2 quarters to the appointment of their committee (63%), 4 quarters or less for the completion of their first draft (61%), and 3 quarters or less to complete their orals (75%).

Another way of looking at completion schedules was to take only Group 1, those who had received the Ph.D., and compute the actual number of quarters between the date of admission and graduation. These data are based on University records, not on questionnaire responses.

TABLE 6. The Number of Graduate Respondents* (Group 1) by Number of Quarters Taken to Complete the Ph.D. Based on University Records

# of Quarters	# of Students	# of Quarters	# of Students
0*	4	21	1
8	1	23	2
9	2	24	1
10	1	26	1
11	3	27	2
12	2	28	1
14	4	29	2
15	1	36	1
16	1	39	1
17	2	41	1
18	1	42	1
19	3	49	1
20	3	51	1

*Data was not available for 4 of the 44 respondents in Group 1.

In these data 22.5% completed in 12 quarters or less, 37.5% completed in 13 to 20 quarters, and 40% completed in 21 to 51 quarters; the median was 19 quarters; the mode was 14; the average number of quarters was 21.6.

The length of time by stages and total length of time (using questionnaire responses for number of quarters by stage, and university records for total number of quarters) were then compared, for Group 1 only (N=40), by means of a simple correlation in a Pearson R Analysis. The results of this correlation are shown in the matrix presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7. Correlation Matrix of Length of Time by Stages and Total Time for Graduate Respondents

Item	Entry to Prelims	Prelims to Committee	Committee to First Draft	First Draft to Orals	Total
Entry to Prelims	1.000				
Prelims to Committee	.344*	1.000			
Committee to First draft	.298*	.239	1.000		
First draft to Orals	.393*	.175	.175	1.000	
Total # of Quarters	.421*	.448*	.366*	.493*	1.000

*significant

p.r $\geq$ .257 $<$ .075
p.r $\geq$ .304 $<$ .050
p.r $\geq$ .358 $<$ .025
p.r $\geq$ .393 $<$ .010

TABLE 8. Univariate Statistics for the Table 7 Correlation Matrix

Item	Mean	SD
Entry to Prelims	3.4	2.0
Prelims to Committee	2.4	3.0
Committee to First Draft	3.4	3.2
First draft to Orals	2.5	2.6
Total	21.6	12.2

In these data a significant correlation appears among the time between Entry and Prelims and each of the other phases of the program in terms of length of time. These data indicate that the rate at which respondents in Group 1 moved through the first stage of the Ph.D. program predicted the rate of movement through subsequent stages.

The Univariate statistics indicate that in these data the mean number of quarters in any one stage varied from 2.4 to 3.4 quarters. The high standard deviations indicate that there is a large amount of variance accounted for by individual differences.

It should be remembered in interpreting these data that the self-report figures do not account for lapses of inactivity in working on the Ph.D. program. They reflect rather, the number of quarters the student counted as time actively involved in pursuing his degree. The "total" figure reflects all quarters, active or inactive, between the time the student enrolled and the time he was awarded his degree.

The remaining variables were analysed in terms of their relationships to length of completion data for stages of the program and total time.

C. Influence of Master's Degree from University of Chicago on Completion

In view of the fact that students receiving a Master's degree in adult education at The University of Chicago have already completed many of the course requirements for the Ph.D. it might be anticipated that such students would move through the Ph.D. program more rapidly than students who have not received such a degree. In order to investigate this possibility, respondents with a master's degree in adult education obtained at the University of Chicago were compared with respondents who had not received such a degree.

Eleven respondents had received a master's degree in adult education at The University of Chicago prior to enrolling in the

Ph.D. program. Six of these had completed the Ph.D. The remaining five were still enrolled as active students. An analysis was made of the total length of time from enrollment in the Ph.D. program to graduation, using the total number of quarters data compiled from university records for five Group 1 respondents who submitted usable returns. These five were compared with Group 1 respondents who had not received a masters degree at The University of Chicago prior to enrolling in the Ph.D. program. The mean number of quarters taken for completion for the Group 1 respondents with a master's degree was 24, with a range from 11 to 41. The mean number of quarters for Group 1 respondents without an MA was 21.2, with a range from 8-51. Statistical significance was not computed for this comparison but, on inspection the means indicate that those students who had a University of Chicago MA prior to enrolling in the Ph.D. program took, on the average, slightly longer than those without a master's degree. The small size of the n used for this analysis reduces the usefulness of the finding, but the direction of the effect of a master's degree is clearly opposite to that which would be logically expected.

D. Influence of Number of Dependents, Sources of Financial Support and Institutional Relationship on Completion Time

It is generally assumed that situational characteristics (i.e. family responsibilities, institutional commitments, financial constraints) influence a graduate student's progress toward the Doctor's degree. In an effort to assess some of the influences of these characteristics, selected sets of data have been analyzed for their relationship with the number of quarters required for graduation.

A relationship appears to be present between a student's number of dependents and the length of time taken to complete his Ph.D. study. The relationship is identified in the response from the 44 program graduates:

TABLE 9. Quarters Required for Graduation Comparing Students with Different Numbers of Dependents (N=44)

Unit	Total Group	Number of Dependents						
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sample	44*	8*	6	6*	11	9*	3	1
Mean # of Qtrs	21.6	23.0	19.2	17.6	26.6	17.3	19.3	28.0
Mean # of Qtrs	21.6	23.0	22.5			18.9		
Median # of Qtrs	19.0	19.0	19.5			17.0		
Mean # of Qtrs	21.6	23.0	21.3					
Median # of Qtrs	19.0	19.0	19.0					

*Four respondents did not report their entry dates.

The data indicate that students with greater family responsibilities complete their graduate study programs in a slightly shorter period than do those with fewer family responsibilities.

Leave from a home university did not appear to influence the period of study required to obtain the degree. When the responses from Group 1 respondents (N=44) were analyzed, the 18 who were not on leave from an institution required an average of 21.7 quarters while those who were on leave required an average of 21.6 quarters for completion. Those who had a home university obligation as a result of their study leave required an average of 20.6 quarters while those on leave without an obligation required an average of 22.1 quarters for completion. None of these comparisons appear to reveal a major influence on the students progress through the Ph.D. program.

Analysis of data on student employment and their sources of financial assistance during the Ph.D. program does appear to indicate an influence of these factors on length of completion for the Group 1 respondents. Many respondents reported more than one form of assistance or employment and the categories in Tables 7 and 8 (based on N=44) contain considerable overlap.

TABLE 10. Influences of Student or Spouse Employment on The Number of Quarters Required for Completion

Item	Number of Graduate Students	Average Number of Quarters	Median # of Qtrs
Employed Part-Time	9	28.0	12.0
Spouse Employed	17	18.3	16.0
Not Employed	17	21.1	17.0
Employed Full-time	18	23.4	19.5

TABLE 11. Influences of Student Financial Assistance on The Numbers of Quarters Required for Completion

Item	Number of Graduate Students	Average Number of Quarters	Median # of Qtrs
Univ. of Chicago Scholarship	7	15.7	11.5
Home Univ. Assist.	12	17.9	17.0
Grant-Some Work	13	18.5	15.0
Fellowship	20	21.1	19.0
No Assistance	9	23.4	19.5
Research Assistant	13	26.3	25.0

It appears that the research assistant position, full-time employment and no financial assistance are negatively related to rapid progress towards the degree. The University of Chicago scholarship award appears most effective in predicting

rapid progress through the program. This relationship may be a function of the scholarship selection procedure or of the implementing effects of the scholarship. A graduate student who holds a part-time job (other than research assistant) has a spouse who works and/or receives university scholarship financial assistance and/or home university support appears to be more likely to complete the program in less time than the average graduate from the program.

The reason for the substantial difference in the effects of part-time employment and being a research assistant (which is a form of part-time employment) is not clear from these data. One possible explanation might be that research assistanceships may be given to those students who are unable to compete successfully for other forms of financial assistance. Of 22 research assistants in the total sample, only two reported receiving a university scholarship. In the graduated student group, no student reported having been a research assistant and having received a university scholarship but eight of the 13 who had been research assistants at least received one additional form of financial assistance.

The relatively low remunerations paid to research assistants may make it necessary to also work part-time. This interpretation is not supported however. Six of the 13 students who were research assistants and reported working part-time had an average completion rate of 20.6 quarters. The average number of quarters required for completion for research assistants who did not work part-time was 28.4 quarters. These two sub-groups did not differ substantially in other sources of financial assistance. Working part-time in addition to being a research assistant had a positive relationship

with the speed of completion of the program. The reason for these differences remain unexplained.

E. Influence of Leaving the University before Completion

Many students leave the University at some time before completing the Ph.D. program. It is a logical assumption that leaving the campus slows a student's progress toward completion. It is also possible that leaving the University, at least temporarily, has positive effects for some students. The distribution of students leaving or not leaving the campus, and their perception of the effect of leaving is shown in Table 12 by group.

As can be seen from this table, a majority (56.8%) of the Group 1 students had left the campus at some time during their program. As would be expected, the percentage of Group 2 students who have left is less (29.4%), and the percentage of Group 3 students who have left is 78.6%. Only two respondents perceive the influence of having left the University as distinctly positive and the majority (63%) of those who have left report that leaving had a negative influence on their progress. More students who leave do so between completing prelims and getting a proposal accepted than at any other time; with the next largest movement occurring between acceptance of the proposal and the end of data collection. The period in which the student leaves does not appear to influence his perception of leaving -- having had a negative influence on progress toward the degree.

A comparison of the average number of quarters taken to complete the degree by Group 1 students who did and did not leave

TABLE 12. Distribution of Students Leaving and Not Leaving the University During the Ph.D. Program by Group and Perceived Influence

			Group 1				Group 2				Group 3				Group 4				
		Perceived Influence	+	-	0	NR	+	-	0	NR	+	-	0	NR	+	-	0	NR	Total
Left Campus During Ph.D. Program	Y	Before Prelims		1		1			2			2				1			7
		Before Proposal Accepted		10		2		1					1	1		2			17
		Before All Data Collected		2	1			1			1	4				1			10
	E	Before 1st Draft Completed			1							1	1						3
	S	Before All Rqmnts Met	1																1
		When left Not Rprtd	2				1			+				1					4
		Yes (Total)	25				5				12				4				46
		No	19				13				3				4				39

+ = students considered leaving had a positive effect
- = students considered leaving had a negative effect
0 = neutral or ambivalent
NR = no response

the campus shows that the mean number of quarters taken by those who did leave (N=22, data missing for 3) was 22.1 quarters and the mean number of quarters taken by those students who report not leaving the university (N=16, data missing for 3) was 20.81. The median number of quarters taken by students who left was 20, and the median taken by students who did not leave was 17.5. These findings suggest that there is a trend for students who leave the campus at some point in their program to take longer than students who stay at the university throughout their program. The average difference is 1.19 quarters and the difference between medians is 2.5 quarters.

The direction of this difference is consistent with the preponderant perceived direction of influence of leaving the campus on completion. The relationship between perceived influence and actual influence was analysed for those graduated respondents who reported having left. Those who perceived the influence of having left the campus as negative required a mean of 25.5 quarters to complete and those who perceived it as positive or neutral required an average of 16.2 quarters. The medians were 24.5 and 14 quarters, with ranges of 11-51 and 9-36, respectively. The distribution as to the phase of the program in which they left is comparable for the two groups. The correspondence shown here between perceived effect and actual effect on progress is not surprising in view of the fact that these are all graduated students who have actual evidence as to their completion time.

The high correlation between perceived and actual influence on leaving the campus should not be interpreted as evidence that

students accurately predict the effect of leaving the campus prior to their departure since it might be assumed that at least some of the students who left expecting no negative effects changed their minds on the basis of experience after leaving. Subjective comments on the questionnaires suggest that this was the case.

These data do, however, suggest that leaving the campus before completing the program has differential effects on completion time: for a minority of students who leave the relationship is positive, for the majority who leave it is negative.

F. Influence of Perception of Completion Time Expectations, Adequacy of Counselling, Delaying Factors as Internal or External and Major Factors with Influence on Rate of Completion.

Questions were asked regarding respondents' perceptions of the nature of problems which hindred their progress on the Ph.D. and of adequacy of counselling at various stages in the program, in an attempt to identify and perhaps clarify the nature of some of the qualitative dimensions influencing completion rate. The data on completion time expectations, counselling, and internality-externality will be separately analysed in this section, in relationship to completion time, to one another, and to other factors.

1. Time Expected to Complete Ph.D.

One of the concerns of students and faculty which originally prompted this study was the length of time required to complete the Ph.D. A part of this concern appeared to revolve around the setting of realistic expectations about completion time and another part centered around the existence and influence of discrepancies

between student expectations and faculty expectations. In order to investigate these questions, data from several questions dealing with the respondents' expectations and with perceived differences between respondents' and faculty expectations were analysed.

Among those who have completed the Ph.D., responses were analysed to determine the correspondence of the students' original expectations as to the length of time needed to complete the program and actual length of time taken. Table 13 presents the frequency distribution for these two variables.

TABLE 13. Number of Quarters in which Graduates Expected to Complete by Actual Number of Quarters Taken to Complete

Quarters Expected to Complete	Total Quarters Taken to Complete (N=35*)				
	8 or less	9-12	13-16	17+	Totals
8 or less	1	2	2	11	16
9-12	0	5	4	7	16
13+	0	0	0	3	3
Totals	1	7	6	21	35

*Nine respondents did not furnish sufficient data for this comparison.

(It should be pointed out that this analysis compares responses to a question asking how many quarters of full time work did you expect to take, with the actual number of quarters taken from entry to graduation based on university records. It is clear that most students taking more than 16 quaters to complete the program are not full-time students during the total time.)

These data show a consistent trend in the direction of most respondents taking longer to complete the program than they expect to. This trend is strongest among those who expect to take the

shortest length of time. There is an inverse relationship between expecting to complete in a minimum length of time and actually doing so.

Twenty-one (56.7%) of the Group 1 respondents who answered the question (N=37), and 23 (74.2%) of the 31 respondents in Groups 2 and 3 combined, had changed their expectations regarding the total number of quarters of full time work required to complete the degree at least once since they entered the program. In the total sample, the number of times expectations were changed ranged from 1 to more than 9, with 14 respondents indicating they changed their expectations five or more times. It can be concluded from these data that the students' expectations at time of entry regarding the amount of full-time study necessary to complete the degree are not reliable estimates and have little or no relation to how long it will actually take to complete the program.

Data regarding respondents' perceptions of whether their expectations about completion time were at variance with the faculty's expectations were analysed for Group 1 and Groups 2 and 3 combined and are shown in Table 14.

TABLE 14. Perception of Own Expectations at Variance with Faculty's Expectations were Analysed for Group 1 and Groups 2 and 3 combined.

Expectations at Variance with Faculty	Group 1 (N=44) No.	%	Groups 2 & 3 Combined No.	%
No Difference	26	59.1	7	21.9
Student thought less time than faculty	3	6.8	9	28.1
Student thought more time than faculty	4	9.1	6	18.7
Ambivalent	7	15.9	8	25.0
No Answer	4	9.1	2	6.2

The graduated respondents are almost three times as likely as the non-graduated respondents to perceive agreement between their own expectations and those of the faculty. Groups 2 and 3 are four times as likely as the graduated group to expect to take less time than they think the faculty expects. Twice as many Groups 2 and 3 respondents as Group 1 have the opposite perception - i.e., that faculty believe that the program can be completed in less time than the respondents believe. One quarter of the Groups 2 and 3 respondents are ambivalent in their responses.

These differences may be, in part, an artifact of the post hoc nature of the data, particularly for the graduated group. They could also be interpreted as indicating that, as compared with non-graduated students, those students who have completed the program have learned to communicate more accurately with the faculty - either before or after graduation.

2. Perceived Adequacy of Counselling

A number of questions were designed to elicit respondents' perceptions of the availability and approachability of faculty and the adequacy of counselling at various stages of the program. Responses from the total sample were analysed first to get an overview of the responses to these questions. Table 15 shows these basic data.

From these data it appears that the majority of responding students are satisfied with the counselling at all stages but that there is also some dissatisfaction. Counselling at Prelims and at Entry are perceived as most adequate; counselling at Entry and at the Proposal stage are perceived as most inadequate. The data

for the last three stages must be discounted to some extent because of the large no response category. Presumably these respondents have not reached these stages of their programs.

TABLE 15. Perceived Availability and Approachability of Faculty and Adequacy of Counselling by Stage for Total Sample (N=85)

Item	Yes No.	Yes %	No No.	No %	Ambiv No.	Ambiv %	NR No.	NR %
Availability	59	69.4	8	9.4	14	16.5	4	4.5
Approachability	51	60.0	10	11.8	14	16.5	10	11.8
Adequacy of Counselling								
At Entry	54	63.5	25	29.4	2	2.4	4	4.7
At Prelims	60	70.6	14	16.5	2	2.4	9	10.6
At Proposal	48	56.5	20	24.6	8	9.4	9	0.6
At Data Collection	48	56.5	6	7.6	2	2.4	29	34.1
Writing Dissertation	43	50.6	9	10.6	4	4.7	29	34.1
Language	41	48.2	11	12.9	1	1.2	32	37.7

In view of the high percentage of respondents who are ambivalent about the availability and approachability of faculty some qualitative responses which reflect the nature of the ambivalence are presented here. Examples related to availability of faculty are:

> "Fair. Any problem could be dealt with if it could wait 2 weeks, until you could get on the calendar of your advisor."
>
> "Fair - always felt it was interrupting something more important . . ."

The major factor which seems to account for both ambivalent and negative responses to this question appeared to be the length of time students waited for appointments. Many satisfied students had the same complaint. A few students felt that extended absence of faculty members had delayed their progress, and a few commented that they found faculty in other departments unavailable.

Examples of ambivalent responses to the question on faculty approachability were:

"Really too formal to encourage students to ask for 'special help'."

"On some matters. The first years I was highly selective about what I approached them on - with [one] exception."

"Negligible because of the faculty's indifference to other than intellectual factors."

There is no consistent factor which accounts for the ambivalent responses to this question but faculty formality, the students' non-conforming independence, "personality" clashes, and fear on the part of the student were all mentioned as factors contributing to faculty being seen as more or less unapproachable.

In view of the growth of the adult education program over time, and possible influences of changes in the faculty student ratio, the data on availability, approachability and counselling adequacy were divided into two segments, responses of students who enrolled through 1963 and responses of students enrolled after 1963. The year 1963 was chosen because it was in this year that faculty size began to increase. Ideally, these data should be analysed by changes in faculty-student ratio, but such data were not available in the study. The distribution of responses, by enrollment period is shown in Table 16. Based on the analysis presented in Table 16 it appears that, in spite of the increase in faculty size since 1963, students enrolled since 1963 have found counselling less adequate than students enrolled through 1963.

An index score of overall satisfaction with counselling was computed for respondents in Group 1 only and compared with total

number of quarters taken to complete. The index was computed by giving each yes response a weight of 1, each no a weight of -1, and ambivalent or no-response categories a weight of 0.

TABLE 16. Distribution of Responses to Availability, Approachability and Adequacy of Counselling by Enrollment Periods for Total Sample.

Item	Year of Entry	Yes No.	Yes %	No No.	No %	Ambiv No.	Ambiv %	NA No.	NA %
Availability	Through 1963 (N=53)	40	75.5	6	11.3	5	9.4	2	3.8
	Post 63 (N=32)	19	59.7	2	6.2	8	25	2	6.2
Approachability	Through 1963	34	64.5	4	7.7	8	15.3	7	13.3
	Post 63	17	53.5	6	18.8	5	15.6	3	9.4
Adequacy: At entry	Through 1963	35	66.0	14	26.6	1	1.9	3	5.7
	Post 63	18	56.3	11	34.4	1	3.1	1	3.1
At Prelims	Through 1963	40	65.5	8	15.3	1	1.9	4	7.7
	Post 63	19	59.7	6	18.8	2	6.2	5	15.6
At Proposals	Through 1963	34	64.5	11	20.8	5	9.4	3	5.7
	Post 63	13	40.6	9	28.2	3	9.4	6	18.8
At Data Coll.	Through 1963	36	67.9	6	11.3	1	1.9	10	18.9
	Post 63	12	37.6	0	0	1	3.1	18	56.3
Writing Disrt'n	Through 1963	34	64.5	8	15.3	1	1.9	10	18.9
	Post 63	9	28.2	1	3.1	3	9.4	18	56.3
Language	Through 1963	30	56.6	7	13.2	1	1.9	14	26.6
	Post 63	11	34.4	3	9.4	0	0	17	53.0

* The difference between the through 1963 group and the post 1963 group in "Yes" responses to adequacy of counselling over the 6 time periods is significant at the $p < .025$ level, using a t statistic.

Total scores of +8 for completely satisfied and -8 for completely dissatisfied were possible. The median split on this index fell at +6, reflecting a fairly high general level of satisfaction with counselling in this group, which is consistent with the analysis entry period. A comparison of the Group 1 respondents having scores above the median and below the median was carried out to determine whether relative satisfaction with counselling had an influence on length of completion. The mean number of quarters taken to complete the Ph.D. by respondents above the median was 21.3 (range = 9-41 quarters, data missing for 3), and by respondents below the median was 21.8 (range = 8-51 quarters, data missing for 1). On the basis of this analysis satisfaction with counselling appears to have almost no effect on total completion time for Group 1 respondents.

Another analysis compared perceived adequacy of counselling with length of time taken at given junctures in the program for the total sample within the two periods where the greatest proportion of respondents reported counselling as inadequate. Tables 17 and 18 reflect the resulting distributions. From Table 17 it is clear that the majority of students complete prelims in four quarters or less and that the majority believe that counselling at entry is adequate. The proportion perceiving counselling at entry as inadequate is consi-erably higher for Groups 2 and 3 than for Group 1. There does not, however, appear to be a significant relationship between perception of counselling at entry as inadequate and taking more than four quarters to complete prelims.

TABLE 17. Distribution of Respondents Taking More and Less than Four Quarters From Entry to Prelims by Perceived Adequacy of Counseling at Entry and by Group.

Quarters- Entry to Prelims		Group 1 N=44		Group 2 N=18		Group 3 N=15		Group 4 N=8		Totals
		4 or less	+4	4 or less	+4	4 or less	+4	4 or less	+4	
Adequacy of Counselling at Entry	Yes	27 61.3%	6 13.6%	7 38.9%	2 11.1%	5 33.3%	1 6.6%	6 75.0%		54
	No	7 15.9%	1 2.3%	5 27.8%	3 16.7%	6 40.0%	1 6.6%	2 25.0%		25
	Amb.. & No Res.	3 6.8%			1 5.5%	2 13.3%				6
	Totals	37	7	12	6	13	2	8		85

TABLE 18. Distribution of Respondents by Number of Quarters Taken Between Prelims and Proposal Acceptance by Perceived Adequacy of Counseling at Proposal State.

Quarters - Prelims to Prop.		Group 1 N=44				Group 2 N=18				Group 3 N=15				Group 4 N=8				Tot.
		0-2	3-4	5-6	7+	0-2	3-4	5-6	7+	0-2	3-4	5-6	7+	0-2	3-4	5-6	7+	
Adequacy of Counselling at Proposal Stage	Yes	26 59.2%	4 9.1%	2 4.5%	3 6.8	2 11.2		3 16.7	1 5.6	1 6.7	1 6.7			3 37.5	2 25%			48
	No	3 6.8%			1 2.3	1 5.5	1 5.6	3 16.7		6 40%	2 13.3%		1 6.7	2 25%				20
	Ambiv & No Resp.	3 6.8%			2 4.5	6 33.3		1 5.6		4 26.6				1 12.5				17
	Total	32 73.9%	4 9.1%	2 4.5%	6 14%	9 50%	1 5.6	7 38.9	1 5.6	11 73.4	3 20%		1 6.7	6 75%	2 25%			

From Table 18 it is again clear that the majority of the respondents are at the lower e of the scale with regard to the number of quarters taken betwe prelims and acceptance of a proposal. The percent of respondents in Groups 2 and 3 who find counselling not adequate is again greater than the percent of Group 1 who feel this way. There is a definite difference in the length of time taken at this stage by Group 2 students as compared with all other groups, and a corresponding lower satisfaction with counselling at this stage. However, the figures for Group 3 indicate that this group perceives counselling at the proposal stage as even more inadequate than does Group 2, but does not exhibit longer completion time at this stage.

The high correspondence between rapid progress and satisfaction with counselling at both stages analysed here in Group 1 is consistent with the lack of difference in length of overall completion time by perceived adequacy of counselling. The large percentage of Group 1 respondents who completed both stages in a minimum number of quarters and who found counselling adequate could be interpreted as an indication that good counselling expedites progress. On the other hand, this finding may be an indication that students who proceeded rapidly at this stage now have different perceptions of the counselling they received.

In summary, no clear pattern of relationship between satisfaction with counselling and completion time has been established from these data. Responses to the questions on counselling provided interesting qualitative data however. Some examples are included here for purposes of clarification of both the range of

responses and types of problems which were mentioned with some frequency. Some examples of extremely positive comments, for instance, were:

"General comment: At every stage I felt my professors worked to assist me in every way they could to move as rapidly as possible toward the degree and to achieve the highest standards of excellence in the process."

At Entry: "Very good!"

At Proposal Stage: "Excellent - almost daily."

Courseling on Proposal - "I received good advice!! Now that I look back, I am quite sure I couldn't read it very effectively."

Some examples of ambivalent comments are:

At Entry: "I sought none - none was offered. I existed and thrived on folklore from other students and information in the calendar."

At proposal stage: "No. Again this was my failure to produce a written document quickly enough and not wanting to expose weaknesses which I could recognize to others. Though by so doing faculty could have given more help and progress would have been more rapid, it seems to be a violation of my own judgment which is better than my ability to produce."

At Prelims: "I depended mainly on rumors. This was one time when I felt that one was strictly self-sustaining."

Some examples of negative comments are:

At dissertation stage: "I had to reconcile what I felt were conflicts in the advice given me by members of my committee."

At Proposal Stage: "No. Lots of criticism about idea and lack of progress but little direction given in a positive manner."

At Entry: "I wish they weren't so non-directive. For example, it took me six months to learn I could not write."

At Proposal Stage: "The explicit assumption that any counselling must be initiated by the student was dysfunctional in my case - a much more direct approach explaining faculty concern with my lack of progress would probably have been more helpful. I might have been able to think through my rationalizations sooner."

In interpreting the data on perceived adequacy of counselling it is difficult to draw firm conclusions. Satisfaction with counselling is relatively high in general but there is definitely some dissatisfaction with counselling at all stages of the program. This dissatisfaction is greatest at the entry and proposal stages. Respondents enrolled after 1963 report significantly less satisfaction with counselling at all stages than do respondents enrolled up to 1963, in spite of increased faculty size. It may be that students perceive counselling as less adequate as the program expands because the interactional matrix becomes larger and less personal. Some support for this interpretation is found in the qualitative data regarding counselling, specifically in the mention of formality, lack of direct approach, and effects of appointment schedules. Satisfaction with counselling does not appear to be related to total completion time in Group 1 but this may be explained, in part, by lack of variance in this group's satisfaction levels. (There may also be an artifact of the post-hoc nature of the data operating here: those who complete may recall their experiences more favorably than those who are still actively involved in the program.) There does seem to be a relationship between dissatisfaction with counselling at entry and at the proposal stage and number of quarters taken to complete these stages for Group 2, but this relationship is not borne out for Group 3 respondents.

3. Perception of Delaying Factors as Internal or External

When the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which external factors (i.e. work, money, dependents) and internal

factors (i.e. motivation, security, initiative) slowed their progress in securing the doctorate, they supplied these data on a six point scale, measuring increasing amounts of influence on each factor, at each of five stages in their study programs:

TABLE 15. Internal and External Influences on Student Progress Toward the Doctorate

Item	Total Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	Graduates	Mean	Standard Deviation
Prelims:						
Internal	85	2.282	2.015	44	2.431	2.150
External	85	1.788	1.711	44	1.659	1.613
Language:						
Internal	85	3.000	2.324	44	3.022	2.297
External	85	1.458	1.735	44	2.545	2.704
Proposal:						
Internal	85	3.070	2.213	44	3.159	2.230
External	85	2.341	1.985	44	2.068	1.730
Data:						
Internal	85	1.858	2.055	44	2.545	2.150
External	85	1.394	2.070	44	2.318	2.054
Writing:						
Internal	85	2.447	2.452	44	3.386	2.243
External	85	2.188	2.402	44	2.704	2.267
Total:						
Internal	85	12.741	8.121	44	13.840	9.134
External	85	9.835	6.546	44	9.636	6.605

The respondents perceived internal factors to be their most important deterrent to the degree in monst instances. External factors were also considered important deterrents in the advanced stages of the study program. Only at the data collection stage did the entire group consider external factors more important deterrents than internal factors. Internal factors appeared most limiting at the proposal and language requirement phases of the program when all the responses are considered. External factors also appeared to be important deterrents at the proposal stage. When the responses from the graduates (Group 1) are considered, internal factors at

the writing, proposal, language and data collection phases are reported to be the most limiting factors. At the writing and data collection phases of the program external factors also appeared to be important perceived deterrents. Although differences can be found between the responses of the graduates and the entire group, the general pattern of slowing factors for each group remains quite similar.

The respondents' perceptions of the internality and externality of the factors delaying their progress toward the doctorate are generally related to the length of time required to obtain the degree. When responses from the entire sample are analyzed, the correlations presented in Table 20 are identified:

TABLE 20. Influence of Perception of Delaying Factors as Internal and External on Rate of Progress Through the Graduate Program. For Total Sample (N=85)

Rate of Progress	Perception of Delaying Factors					
	Prelims		Language		Proposal	
	Internal	External	Internal	External	Internal	External
Enrollment to Prelims	.205	.068	.011	.292	.214	.217
Prelims to Committee	.116	.092	.234	.004	.330	.237

p.r $\geq$ .183 $<$ .075
p.r $\geq$ .217 $<$ .050
p.r $\geq$ .256 $<$ .025
p.r $\geq$ .283 $<$ .010

The respondents from all groups together perceived internal factors at the prelim, language requirement and proposal phases as influences delaying their progress through the first two stages

of the degree program. External factors at the language requirement and proposal phases also limited their progress through these stages of the program. The data support the conclusion that internal factors at the proposal phase of the program are major deterrents to rapid progress toward the degree. They also support the conclusion that factors perceived as external have a significant effect on progress, particularly at the proposal stage. The several significant correlations between perceived influence and actual progress would seem to reflect a certain degree of objectivity in respondents' perceptions of the influencing factors.

When only the responses from the graduates (Group 1) are considered, the correlations in Table 21 are identified:

TABLE 21. Influence of Perception of Delaying Factors as Internal and External on Progress Through The Graduate Program For Group 1 (N=44)

Rate of Completion	Perception of Delaying Factors									
	Prelims		Language		Proposal		Data Coll.		Writing	
	Intnl	Extnl	Intnl	Extnl	Intnl	Extnl	Intnl	Extnl	Intnl	Extnl
Enrollment to Prelims	.105	.166	-.087	.125	.035	.170	.014	.005	.018	.296
Prelims to Committee	.158	.274	.120	.003	.329	.173	.158	.100	.123	.055
Committee to First Draft	.161	.180	.024	.027	.398	.204	.124	.347	.278	.226
First Draft to Orals	-.241	-.120	.157	.412	-.115	.171	-.186	-.015	-.159	.424
Total Quarters	.040	.235	-.104	.244	-.102	.026	-.017	.271	.046	.533

p. r ≥ .257 < .075
p. r ≥ .304 < .050
p. r ≥ .358 < .025
p. r ≥ .397 < .010

Although the graduate respondents may have experienced greater difficulty in remembering these influences (some respondents commented that this was the case) the fact that they have completed the degree allows use of the entire range of their data and correlations with their actual time for completion. External factors appeared to be of greater importance to the graduates than to all respondents taken together. External factors at the writing, data collection, language requirement and prelim phases of the program were correctly perceived as influences slowing progress toward the degree. Internal factors at the proposal and writing phases also contributed to longer time. Insignificant negative correlations were identified between internal influences or duration of phase for language requirement, proposal and data collection phases. These correlations may reflect some positive effects related to a student's perceiving the source of delay as within himself and therefore amenable to action on his own part.

4. Factors which were Perceived as Expediting or Hindering Progress.

The data from two questions which asked the respondents to indicate the factors which he believed expedited and delayed his progress at the various stages of the program were not quantifiable. Respondents' qualitative comments on these questions are some of the most interesting and, possibly, meaningful data from the study. Unfortunately, space permits inclusion of only a small portion of the comments made. A few examples are presented for each question in order to reflect some of the more common factors suggested

Examples of comments regarding expediting factors are:

General: "1. Major professor - a great prodder
2. Committee members - extremely helpful and always available.
3. Self-discipline - the area of greatest breakdown.
4. An understanding wife and 2 kids who wanted to get off the starvation regimen."

"Faculty and financial help were magnificent throughout."

Prelims: "1) Faculty member who gave me confidence to take them earlier than I would have.
2) one or two students with whom I studied
3) taking the courses on which tested."

"Prelims - I took them before taking all courses - I would encourage more of this."

Proposal: "A real problem for me: I think it was the regularly weekly faculty-student meetings I sought and very regularly obtained which really moved me along through this phase."

"Review, analysis, and criticism by fellow students, particularly in the seminar."

"A note book of ideas, suggestions, and methods, etc. collected during first 3 quarters helped me write a proposal and have it accepted in a week."

"1) research seminar
2) My chairman's help and creative thinking of a second committee member."

"A sense of extreme pressure to produce a proposal (pressure from the faculty was indirect but clear), expedited my getting started on it but perhaps, in the long run, was not expeditious in that I really got started before I had thought it through properly and then took a long time wallowing around."

"Nothing: this stage was most difficult. Research seminars and other curricular and ancillary activities served only to lead me down blind alleys. However, when a dissertation idea finally dropped into my lap, all the previous work did help to make the actual drafting of the acceptable proposal quite simple."

Collecting Data: "Access to an institutional staff where I was employed."

"Pretesting the instrument - first in person, then by mail before a personal interview, and then by mail with a

large sample, ironed out the bugs."

Writing Dissertation: "Required self-discipline, perhaps more than any other challenge I have faced. You must make yourself stay with the task regardless of how inviting other distractions may be."

"[Faculty member's] excellent critical analysis and helpful suggestions on drafts."

"Perseverance and frequent consultation with my major advisor and committee members."

Writing Abstract: "Previous writing experience."

Examples of comments regarding delaying factors are:

General: "I do not believe that the doctoral program at UC delayed my progress. My own personal decisions to work and get field experience before completing the dissertation was the major factor of delay."

"Lack of time and distance from the University and isolation from other students and the faculty were major deterrents at all levels of the program."

At Prelims: "Not being able to take certain classes a particular quarter. That is, conflicts between scheduling of classes. The internship program in C.C.E. upset class schedule."

"Poorly taught statistics and documentary research courses."

"Winter quarter entry - Social and academic conditions appear best for those who enter Fall Quarter."

At Proposal: "Highly critical remarks from faculty during my first year which made me very cautious about daring to put forth any idea. The highly authoritarian manner of some faculty in pushing the proposal without giving some help."

"Failure to get definitive help at Res. Sem. when proposal first presented. Feel there needs to be a better way to critique and to help people. This put me back several months as I was too depressed to get going until some fellow students helped me clear my thinking."

"Inadequate background - The lack of a course to develop understanding of basic concepts (the research seminar does not do this.)

-"Inadequate skill in working with advisor.
-"Criticism that I perceived as negative and very little that was positive.

"My own stubbornness in wanting to do something, I wanted to do and in refusing to 'play games.'"

"Lack of model proposals
Lack of daily contact with chairman - weekly or bi-monthly contacts are not frequent enough!"

"Spending time with faculty members who didn't understand or who weren't sympathetic to the study I wanted to do."

"My committee was very hard on me and forced me to establish very precise criteria. This delayed me (point of question) But I am glad they were this demanding."

"Lack of adequate knowledge on how to put proposal together in an acceptable manner. Being advised not to start thinking about research problem till after completing prelims. A course on developing and carrying out a research problem early in the doctoral program I feel would be highly desirable."

"After many false starts, I feel it took me several months to 'learn to read' the faculty members on what they really were saying about revisions, questions, problems and good points of the various proposals I presented to them."

"1) divergent views among the members of the committee
2) lack of constructive support and/or suggestions from the chairman.'

Collecting Data: "Instrumenting my study is the heart of my dissertation. I could have spent years developing the "right" instruments for the study, but they told me it was just a dissertation. Ambivalence over this issue never ends!"

"Working full-time."

"Pure mass of material available to be plowed through."

Writing Dissertation: "Major professor insisted on material being added and then asking to have it taken out when other members of the committee disagreed with him. This required two unnecessary rewritings."

"The proposal shortcomings made a major block at this time."

"Frequent changes of opinion on part of advisor."

"Felt like I was in a straight jacket trying to meet somebody(?) else's idea of a report."

"Getting prompt feedback on chapters as written and on dissertation as whole. At least 5 to 7 of my 10 drafts have been a waste of time."

"My opinion of what was relevant differed from the opinion of my adviser."

Writing Abstract: "Was an anticlimax to the program, and consequently, it was not very rewarding. It was another job that had to be done."

These comments have been selected to represent the types of expediting and delaying factors most often mentioned by respondents. The proportion of comments for the different stages presented reflects the actual proportions in the questionnaires. The greatest proportion of comments were made for the proposal stage, which is consistent with the greater problems experienced at this stage reflected in several other sets of data presented earlier.

C. Influences of Language Requirement

Among the most common respondent criticisms of the program was the language requirement. Some respondents wrote that it is "a tough language requirement that no longer seems meaningful and seems to be just a time consumer"; the value is "none - it should be abolished in our field"; I proved to myself that I could memorize"; while others wrote "I have used it in reading books, journals, and in travel abroad"; it helped get me a better job in the U.S. Army"; or "I think its been very valuable." One wrote that "After I finished all degree requirements including [the] dissertation I asked for [a] waiver for [the alternative of] statistics and got it." Empirically, 24 of the respondents indicated that the language requirement is of negative value, 19 indicated that it is of positive value, seven were ambivalent on this issue and 35 did not respond to the item.

Although most graduate students who have completed the requirement did so after one or two attempts, 14 students required greater efforts. The data were analyzed to determine if those who required greater effort to pass the language exam valued it differently than did those who passed it with one or two attempts.

TABLE 22. The Influence of Language Test Frequency on the Perceived Value of the Language Requirement

Unit	Perceived Value*					
	Positive		Negative		Ambivalent	
	Grads	Other	Grads	Other	Grads	Other
Sample	14	5	11	13	2	5
Test Frequency:						
1	3	1	5	6	1	
2	4	1	3	2		
3	4	3	1	2		
4						
5						
6						
7			1	1		
No Resp.	3		1	2	1	5

*Seventeen graduates and 18 others did not respond to this item.

Those who completed the language requirement with the least effort tended to feel the requirement was of negative value. This tendency may reflect a lack of value attached by the student to something he has already mastered. It may also reflect an objective judgment based on the student's experience with the language. The data available from this study do not provide an expanation of this difference.

A separate measure of the value found in foreign language competence is the number of foreign language publications subscribed

to by the respondents. Thirteen respondents indicated that they subscribed to one, five to two, and one respondent indicated that he subscribed to four foreign language publications. These data are weakened by the fact that at least one of these foreign language publications is printed in several languages with English translations of most content. No sound conclusion can be drawn from these data.

This completes the presentation and analysis of the data from the questionnaire. Some qualitative general comments taken from the questionnaires will be used to illustrate the conclusions and recommendations drawn in Section IV. The next section of this report consists of an analysis of a second source of data on completion and relates completion rates of adult education students to those of students in other special fields in the Department of Education.

Section III. Analysis of Data from the Department of Education

These data are based on students who completed their Ph.D. during the years of 1960 to 1969. The range in these data in the average number of quarters between admission and completion of Ph.D. is from 14.3 to 30.2. Adult education students (22.1) occupy the middle position in a rank order of the seven special fields. Adult education students occupy the lowest rank in terms of the average number of courses taken and the average number of quarters registered, when compared to the other six special fields.

TABLE 23. Summary of Data for Completed Ph.D.s, Autumn 1960 through Summer 1965 by Special Field

Special Field	Average # of Qtrs Elapsed between Admission to Prog. and Graduation	Average # of Courses Taken in Ph.D. prog.	Average # of Quarters Registered
Administration (N=73)	22.6	20.1	10.3
Adult Education (N=42)	22..	17.1	8.6
Curriculum (N=49)	30.2	22 1	12.5
Ed. Psych. (N=37)	25.1	21.1	10.4
ESO (N=30)	18.5	21.7	10.3
Higher Education (N=4)	17.0	14.0	9.2
MESA (N=20)	14.3	21.7	9.8

In the following table the total number of quarters between admission and completion of the Ph.D program is analyzed more specifically.

TABLE 24. Distribution of Number of Quarters from Entry to Completion by Special Field

Special Field	Range	Median	% Taking 12 Qtrs or less	13-20 Quarters	Over 20
Administration (N=73)	8-80	18	23%	32.9%	35.6%
Adult Education (N=42)	8-52	17	23.8%	35.7%	40.5%
Curriculum (N=49)	7-79	25	18.4%	20.4%	61.2%
Ed. Psych. (N=37)	10-39	19	13.5%	37.8%	48.6%
ESO (N=30)	10-60	16	20%	56.7%	23%
Higher Education (N=4)	11-21	17	50%	25%	25%
MESA (N=20)	7-38	12	60%	25%	15%

In this table the data show that about one-fourth of Adult Education students finish in three years or less. This closely parallels the special fields of Administration, Curriculum and ESO. Higher Education (50%) and MESA (60%), representing smaller numbers of students, are the only special fields who have a majority of their students finishing in less than three years. These data indicate various patterns of completion of the Ph.D. within the special field. The number of students in the various special fields and the subject matter appear to influence the swiftness of completion. These data do not include age at entry and number of dependents which might, intuitively, be expected to affect the rage of progress. The rate of completion of adult education students, as compared to other special fields, appears to be relatively the same or better.

The 42 students receiving Ph.D.s in adult education between 1960 and 1969 registered for an average of 8.6 quarters. Within this population Table 25 indicates the number of students who registered for 1, 2 or 3 courses during that period.

TABLE 25. Distribution of Students in Adult Education Registered for 1, 2 or 3 Courses per Quarter

Number of Quarters with One Course	Number of Students	Number of Quarters with Two Courses	Number of Students	Number of Quarters with Three Courses	Number of Students
0	2	0	22	0	3
1	8	1	7	2	5
2	8	2	8	3	7
3	2	3	1	4	13
4	7	4	3	5	10
5	6	7	1	6	2
6	6			7	1
10	2				
12	1				

These data indicate that of the students in this population, 23 were full-time for 4 or 5 quarters and then moved, in general, to a one course per quarter pattern for from 1 to 12 quarters. This profile suggests that for many of the students who completed the Ph.D. between 1960 and 1969 course content was likely limited to required courses and dissertation study.

Section IV. Limitations of the Study

Several limitations of the study have been mentioned previously. The two most serious are the possible cohort effect, and the possibility of a halo effect being partially responsible for the generally more positive responses of the Group 1 sample. These two weaknesses are related and are a result of the procedures used to select the sample and the post hoc nature of the data.

The Group 1 sample was drawn from students who have graduated from the program. It does not include students who may have dropped out at various stages. A large proportion of this group first enrolled prior to 1960 whereas the respondents in groups 2 and 3 all enrolled during or after 1960. Group 4 respondents are comparable to Group 1 respondents with regard to enrollment distribution, but some students who enrolled prior to 1960 and left the program may have been omitted from the population. The respondents included in Groups 1 and 4 probably do not, therefore, adequately represent all students enrolled prior to 1960. The Group 2 sample does reflect all students currently on campus who enrolled prior to fall 1969. Some of these could withdraw from the program in the future. In

this respect, then, the groups are not strictly comparable. Group 1 represents "successful" students over an extended time period. Groups 2 and 3 represent a more complete enumeration of enrolled students over a more truncated time period and may include students who will not attain the Ph.D.

A cohort analysis based on samples of all students ever enrolled, grouped by enrollment period, for several time periods would more accurately take into account possible dropouts, historical changes in the program, differential peer group effects, and variations in student-faculty ratio. Such an analysis was not deemed practical by the study committee because of the difficulty in obtaining complete records of all students enrolled prior to 1950. It was also anticipated that, if only students enrolled after 1960 were used, the N's in many of the program-stage cells, by cohort, would be too small for useful analysis. A follow-up partial cohort analysis of completion rate is currently being undertaken in an attempt to determine the extent to which the analyses carried out here may be biased by a cohort effect.

The comparison of Groups 1 with Groups 2 and 3 and the differences within Group 1 have been the primary bases for analysis in this study. Because of the nature of the Group 1 sample, this approach may have accentuated the differences between groups. The post hoc nature of the data may also accentuate the differences between groups. Graduated student's recollections may be favorably biased. The reward and satisfaction of attaining the degree may influence their perceptions of how difficult or easy the process was. Their collegial status with regard to the faculty, and their experience

in roles similar to those held by the faculty, may modify their perceptions of past experiences as students. Although these possibilities should be kept in mind, the range of Group 1 responses for almost all questions suggests that if such a halo effect is present in the data it is not uniformly so.

Two other cautions should be mentioned.

1. Many of the interpretations in this document are based on averages. The wide range of responses to most questions (in some cases the standard deviations excede the means) suggest that individual variations are extremely important and must be kept in mind when attempting to apply these interpretations to actual situations. The extreme ranges also suggest that averages may be biased and median figures should be used in conjunction with the averages where presented.

2. The survey nature of the study, while it does permit identification of relationships, does not permit inferences regarding the causal direction of the relationships.

One major omission in the study is the absence of data relating completion rate to ability. While the committee believes that such analysis would be useful, it has been unable to obtain comparable data with regard to ability and therefore unable to investigate this question.

Section V. Summary, Co. .lusions and Recommendations

A. Summary.

One of the basic purposes and questions of the study was to obtain data on the actual rage of completion of Ph.D. students in Adult Education. The data related to this question are presented

in Sections II and III of the report. Of the several conclusions which have been drawn relative to completion rates, perhaps the most important is that students in adult education take a median amount of time to complete the Ph.D. as compared with students in other special fields in Education. Adult education students take an average of 21.2 quarters to complete the degree (median = 19, mode = 14).

The findings comparing students presently in residence with graduates of the program and with students active but not in residence lead to the conclusion that the students presently in residence are taking longer to complete the first two phases than did either of the other two groups. A direct relationship between number of quarters taken to complete prelims and overall completion rate was identified for graduates. If this relationship continues to hold for the present group of students it must be concluded that the students now in residence will take longer to complete the program than did their precedessors. The current student group differs from the graduated group in certain respects which may help explain this probable lengthening of completion time. These differences may be less than they appear if the data from the graduated group are biased in a favorable direction. Current student respondents perceive greater discrepancy between their own and faculty expectations regarding quarters of full-time study needed to complete the program. They are less likely to have left the campus at some time during their program. They are less likely to perceive faculty as available and approachable, and significantly less likely

to perceive counselling as adequate, particularly at the entry and proposal stages. Whether current students take longer because expectations are unrealistic and counselling inadequate or perceive that expectations differ and counselling is inadequate because they are dissatisfied with their own progress, is a moot point. What can be said is that these are areas in which they differ from the graduated students in directions logically consistent with the differences in length of time taken to get through prelim and proposal stages.

Returning to the graduated student group, what factors were related to completion rate differences within this group? A University of Chicago master's degree in adult education received prior to enrollment in the Ph.D. program is unrelated to rate of completion. The number of dependents a student had is slightly related to shorter completion time. Working full-time is related to longer completion time, but students who did not work at all had the second longest average completion time. The relationship of type of financial assistance received to completion time is difficult to interpret. Students receiving university scholarship aid and/or assistance from their home university completed in the shortest time and research assistants who did not also work part time had the longest average completion time. Research assistants did not receive university scholarships but did receive other forms of financial assistance.

The relationship between leaving the campus at some point in the program and rate of completion varied depending on whether the influence of leaving is perceived as negative or positive.

Those who perceive the influence of leaving as positive completed more quickly than the average while the opposite is true for those who perceive the influence of leaving as negative.

The graduated students consistently took longer to complete than they expected to, and perceived their expectations to be highly congruent with faculty expectations regarding the length of time needed to obtain a Ph.D. They were largely satisfied with the availability and approachability of faculty and with the counselling provided in the program. In view of the relatively high overall levels of satisfaction with these factors it is not surprising to find that in this group satisfaction with counselling had no influence on overall rate of completion. The same general relationship holds for them at the prelim and proposal stages. Their perception of external factors as significantly delaying their progress is significantly correlated with longer actual rate of completion.

In summary the following general conclusions can be drawn.

1. The student in the past who moved through the program most quickly was one who had several dependents, worked part-time and/or received a university scholarship or support from a home university, completed prelims in four or less quarters, and who perceived the factors delaying his progress as primarily external. The factors included in this study which deal with qualitative aspects of the graduate program, such as counselling expectations, are generally non-predictive of completion rate within the graduated group, but the graduated group differs substantially from the other groups in the sample on these factors.

2. The average length of time taken to complete the Ph.D. will increase, as compared with graduated students, if the relationship between rate of completing prelims and total completion time continues to hold.

3. Neither student expectations with regard to length of full-time study required to complete the degree nor perception of differences between students' and faculty's expectations will predict rate of progress through the program. Both measures underestimate the time required.

4. The emphasis on perceptions of delaying factors as internal or external has shifted from more perception of factors as external among graduated students to more perceptions of factors as internal among all students taken together: this shift is a realistic one as indicated by significant relationships between perceptions and completion rate by phase of program.

5. Perception of counselling as inadequate, particularly at entry and the proposal stage, has increased as the faculty and student body size have increased. Perception of faculty as available and approachable has decreased on the same basis.

6. The relationship of qualitative variables such as counselling with completion rate cannot be determined for other than graduated students because of inadequate completion data for these students. There is, however, cause for concern in the general increase over time in dissatisfaction with these qualitative variables.

7. There are no grounds for expecting the student who has obtained a Master's degree in adult education from The University of Chicago to make more rapid progress toward completion of the Ph.D. than students not having such a degree.

8. The two stages of the program at which most problems arise are the proposal stage and the dissertation-writing stage. Factors seen as contributing to these problems include: formality of faculty, faculty or committees changing their minds, too much criticism and not enough praise, lack of help from fellow students, inadequacy of the research seminar, lack of a research training course, inadequate background on students' part, and independence on part of student. Factors which alleviated these problems include faculty criticism and support, research seminar, criticism and support of fellow students and self discipline.

9. Knowledge of a foreign language sufficient to pass the Social Science Division requirement is generally not seen as valuable or extensively used by students who have passed the exam.

10. Leaving the campus at some point during the Ph.D. program has a differential effect depending on perception of the effect. It is negatively related to speed of completion for those who perceive its effect as negative, but positively related for those who perceive its effect as positive.

11. From 1960 to 1969 adult education students completed the Ph.D. at a rate equal to or better than students in most other special fields in the Department of Education.

12. The individual variation in rate of completion and on related variables is, in all cases, very substantial, and particular care must therefore be exercised in applying the average results to the total population.

B. Recommendations.

The data of this study do not lead directly to specification of particular actions. However, the completion study sub-committee believes that certain general recommendations arise logically from the conclusions presented. These are presented here as recommendations from the sub-committee to the Adult Education Student Committee with the hope that more specific future action goals will be guided by these recommendations.

1. Based on the assumption that the relationship identified for graduates between overall completion time and time taken between enrollment and prelims will continue to hold for the current student group, and on the finding that the current student group takes longer to complete prelims than the graduated group; and assuming that the goal is to complete in a shorter period: it is recommended that the present practice of encouraging students to take prelims as early as possible be continued.

2. Based on the finding that students' own expectations, and their perceptions of faculty expectations, regarding the length of time required to complete the degree substantially underestimate actual completion time; and recognizing that publication of realistic estimates may discourage prospective students; but believing that more accurate information as to the time needed to complete would improve the student's ability to plan his program and his resource utilization more realistically: it is recommended that published expectations regarding the length of time required to complete the Ph.D. program be brought into closer agreement with actual completion time but that this be done in such a way as to reflect the wide variation which does exist.

3. Based on the findings regarding perceived availability and approachability of faculty and adequacy of counselling; and assuming that where there is dissatisfaction with these factors they will have an effect on completion rate: it is recommended that students and faculty investigate ways of improving the availability and approachability of faculty and the adequacy of counselling. Particular attention should be given to improving counselling at entry and at the proposal stage. The major expediting and delaying factors mentioned by students should provide a basis for such efforts.

4. In view of the proportion of problems experienced by students at the proposal and dissertation writing stages: it is recommended that these stages receive particular attention in attempts to improve the program, especially the proposal stage.

5. In view of the finding that the preponderance of delaying factors are perceived as internal by current students and that this perception is positively correlated with actual completion rate in the early stages of the program: it is recommended that students maintain and increase their attempts to provide peer support and assistance to their fellow students in coping with internal problems.

6. Based on the financial provisions which are positively related to rate of completion: it is recommended that efforts be made to maintain, and if possible increase, the number of students supported by university scholarships and by their home universities. Part-time work should be encouraged for students and, where such work opportunities do not meet demand, increased opportunities should be sought. Students concerned with completing as rapidly as

possible should be discouraged from working full time and from accepting research assistantships.

7. In view of the differential effects of leaving the campus before completing the Ph.D. on rate of completion, which are related to perception of the influence of leaving as positive or negative; but also recognizing the findings that leaving the campus is generally perceived as delaying progress and that the overall relationship between leaving and completion time is moderately negative: it is recommended that the generally held assumption that leaving the campus substantially delays progress be critically evaluated in relation to the evidence and the individual's perceptions of the probable effects of leaving when such a decision is under consideration.

8. In view of the absence of a relationship between rate of completion and receipt of a Masters Degree in adult education at the University of Chicago prior to enrolling in the Ph.D. program; and based on the logical expectation that students who have completed a large proportion of the course requirements in adult education before enrolling in the Ph.D. program should be prepared to move more rapidly towards completion than those who have not: it is recommended that students and faculty attempt to clarify why the logical expectations that having a Masters in adult education from the University of Chicago will be related to shorter completion time for the Ph.D. does not hold.

9. In view of the low proportions of religious, racial, and cultural minorities, and of women, in the sample; but recognizing that there has been an increase in these proportions in the current

student groups it is recommended that efforts directed toward recruitment of qualified members of religious, racial, and cultural minorities are made to continue and intensified.

11. In view of the findings regarding variation in the period required and value attached to completion of the language requirement, it is recommended that students and faculty continue to support efforts to broaden the alternatives available to the language requirement.

12. In view of the importance of individual variations in the data, it is recommended that students and faculty continue to recognize that individual variations from the norm are great, in this population, and attempt to increase the number of acceptable alternative approaches to the Ph.D. program.

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